



## Go Downtown and Play!

Posted by **Pierluigi Oliverio** on Monday, August 08, 2011



*Orquesta de Moderna performing at Plaza de Cesar Chavez during last year's Jazzfest. Photo courtesy Chip Chapin.*

Downtown San Jose will be celebrating 22 years of the San Jose Jazz Festival over three days beginning this Friday. Music festivals are held all over the world and provide the unique experience of bringing musicians from across the globe to perform in one city.

The San Jose Jazz Festival is one of the best outdoor events showcasing the Downtown. People speak of the need to close streets and allow walking to be the mode of transit. Well, this festival does that by closing contested streets for the weekend and allowing people to wander from stage to stage and enjoy music.

With so much emphasis on the Internet it is a nice opportunity to actually interact with people while enjoying our public spaces. Our Downtown Guadalupe River park was the stage for a Renaissance Fair this past weekend and will be hosting the Italian Festa the last weekend of August.

There are some people that "pooh-pooh" our Downtown by detracting the area for what they feel it may be lacking, or comparing one aspect to another different and unique city. However, our Downtown "is what it is." Downtown has progressed over 30 years with both public and private investment. I think we need to step back and enjoy what we have instead of waiting for something more or better which may never arise.

Discussions with some people about our Downtown remind me of a friend who is never quite happy. This person has the expectation of something more in life but “more” never seems to arrive, and next thing you know years have passed and this person is older and still unhappy. Having attended outdoor events in the USA and other countries I can attest that there are always a few people at these events who may not be ideal citizens. However, this does not stop the free will of the majority of people to enjoy outdoor events around the world. I walk our Downtown core at night and feel safe. Whichever city I have walked at night I am typically aware of my surroundings and act accordingly.

When you attend the Jazz Festival please patronize and enjoy one of the many Downtown restaurants. I will be at the Jazz Festival and hope you will say hello.

[Follow this link to the 2011 San Jose Jazz Festival website for a lineup and schedule.](#)

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